

Washington Park Arboretum

BULLETIN



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— Washington Park Arboretum —

The Arboretum is a 230-acre dynamic garden of trees and shrubs, displaying internationally renowned collections of oaks, conifers, camellias, Japanese and other maples, hollies and a profusion of woody plants from the Pacific Northwest and around the world. Aesthetic enjoyment gracefully co-exists with science in this spectacular urban green space on the shores of Lake Washington. Visitors come to learn, explore, relax or reflect in Seattle's largest public garden.

The Washington Park Arboretum is managed cooperatively by the University of Washington Botanic Gardens and Seattle Parks and Recreation; the Arboretum Foundation is its major support organization.

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The Arboretum Foundation's mission is to create and strengthen an engaged community of donors, volunteers and advocates who will promote, protect and enhance the Washington Park Arboretum for current and future generations.

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ABOVE: A tiled bench in the walking grounds of the Real Alcazar in Seville. For more information on gardens in Spain, turn to page 19. (Photograph by Steve Whitner)

ON THE COVER: The blooms of *Hamamelis mollis* glow in a pale winter sun. Visit the Arboretum's Joseph A. Witt Winter Garden to see collections of witch hazels and other trees and shrubs with winter interest. To read about Steve Lorton's winter favorites, turn to page 14. (Photograph by Richie Steffen)

NOTE: A photograph of the bark of *Acer tegmentosum* that first appears on page 18 of the Fall 2010 issue of the "Bulletin" should have been credited to Alan Dodson. The "Bulletin" regrets the error.

Celebrating Seattle's Asian Gardens

Dreams do come true. Well, at least, with enough hard work, luck, and sheer determination. That is the story of this Arboretum and also the story of Seattle's newest public garden. After 25 years of dreaming, planning, and fundraising, the small band of dedicated volunteers who worked so hard to make it happen is finally celebrating. The artisans came from China this fall to finish the first courtyard for the Seattle Chinese Garden. I was one of the dreamers, having joined their board nearly 20 years ago. Tears came to my eyes when I toured the site on a mild day in October, accompanied by "Bulletin" editor, Jan Whitner, and the garden's founding president, Jim Dawson. There it was: the artisans' work nearly finished—a magnificent, traditional Sichuan-style courtyard, sitting in the middle of the construction debris on a West Seattle plateau overlooking downtown Seattle. It looked just like the finest gardens I had seen in China (well, a lot newer), just as we all had hoped it would. Congratulations to Jim and Jan and all of my old friends whose tenacity and hard work made the dream a reality.

The Arboretum's own Asian garden, completed just over 50 years ago, had as difficult a birth.

The Seattle Japanese Garden was envisioned in the mid-1930s at the time the Arboretum was first built, but was not completed until 1960—after 25 years of dreaming, planning, and fundraising—interrupted by the severing of relations with Japan during World War II and the internment of Seattle's Japanese-American residents. But, now it is recognized as one of the most authentic "stroll" gardens outside Japan, and the most complete surviving work of two of the twentieth

century's master Japanese garden designers: Juki Iida and Kiyoshi Inoshita. This year we have been honoring the 50th Anniversary of this beloved treasure of the Arboretum, and we will continue the celebration at the Northwest Flower and Garden Show in February.

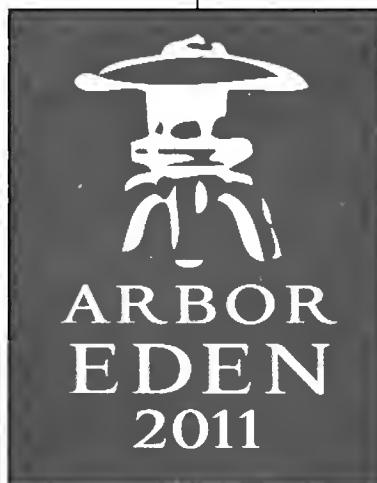
Our display garden this year will be a Japanese Garden designed to highlight key features of our real garden. Our design team includes Phil Wood and Bob Lilly, who have done such fine work for us in the past, as well as new Board Member, Roger Williams, an architect with a deep appreciation of the Japanese design aesthetic and extensive experience here and in Japan. And, our Arbor Eden Preview Party will also be Japanese-themed. I hope at least a few of you will appear there in your kimonos. We made some changes this year, dropping the price of general admission to encourage greater attendance. (See details on page 24.) Many of you have told us that you don't come for the food, but to see the gardens without the crowds. We listened. So, eat first, come have some wine and dessert—enjoy the gardens, and pause a moment to celebrate Seattle's fabulous Asian gardens, new and old.

P.S. Many of you have asked about my eating experiment. I made my goal: a whole week of eating only what I grew, foraged, or made. It was a fascinating experience, a story for a later issue. ~

Cheers,



Paige Miller, Executive Director,
Arboretum Foundation



Renovating The Wild Garden:

HOW TO TAME AN OVERGROWN, HIGH-VISIBILITY, WOODLAND PLANT GARDEN

BY CASS TURNBULL

DRAWINGS BY KATE ALLEN



BAD GARDEN!

*N*ature abhors a garden. I wish I could remember who said that. It's so true. Unless we tiptoed into the woods and built a cabin without touching the ground, most of us have a disturbed site. Upon it, we impose an artist's conception of nature, which is not really a natural area at all. Rather, it is planted with species that may or *may not* have occurred naturally on that site, or occurred naturally with each other. The site will become

a battleground, not a self-sustaining woods, and we will eventually need to intervene.

As soon as plants are put in the ground, the forces of entropy are unleashed. Exotic invasives (laurel, holly and Himalayan blackberry) and not-so-exotic invasives (grass, dandelions and shot weed) move in to take up residence. And then one discovers that even some of the chosen plants are way more prolific—even outright aggressive—compared



THE WELL-BEHAVED GARDEN

to others. Three, four and five plants will begin to occupy the same space. Everything is everywhere! Furthermore, no matter who planted it—the avid amateur, the native plant biologist or the professional designer—in five or 10 years the garden reveals itself to have been overplanted. We are all driven to make it look reasonably right at the beginning, only to find that we have, yet again, underestimated the mature size of shrubs or how many trees to put together—and we foolishly thought the day would never come when our mistakes became apparent. *But now the day is here.*

I am frequently asked to renovate overgrown gardens, especially and increasingly, overgrown native-plant gardens. To bring order out of chaos—and to do so in a way that the garden will still appear natural, or perhaps even a bit wild—is big fun and a real challenge. For years I have enjoyed making people's woods prettier. But before I tackle the area outside the front door, the owner

must first face *The Unpleasant Truth*: Pruning, renovating and all gardening is an unnatural act! The very principles of making a garden look better are antithetical to what might be considered the golden rule of nature—to maximize diversity. In other words, nature, especially in a disturbed area, loves a mess! Birds and bugs and critters love a half-uprooted, topped rotten tree, leaning on a shrub that is full of dead wood, with broken, brown fern fronds, surrounded by prickly bushes impaling dead big leaf maple leaves by the gobs. And your newts, lizards and snakes wish you would leave a pile of rubble and dried dead weeds in the back yard.

You may even have supplied the local fauna with some of these messy areas on your large property. But most folks want something a little more pleasant at the front door. So I try to mimic a more established ecology—maybe not the lovely monoculture of the climax forest, with a single sylvan grove and

a carpet of oxalis, but something more along the line of a shady forest floor at the Mt. Adams campground.

Renovating an overgrown, native-plant garden means separating layers, taking out some of the brown (dead stuff), reducing the number of plants occupying the same place, and deleting other plants completely just to make a nicer-looking garden. This is tough on some folks who will react according to deeply held subconscious beliefs, like:

Plants are either all good or all bad.

Natives are the good plants, and therefore all should live.

Natural means not interfering; I like the overgrown look.

A good pruner could just prune it back to the right sizes, and nothing would have to die.

But... actually... something will. Have to die, that is.

Remove Plants

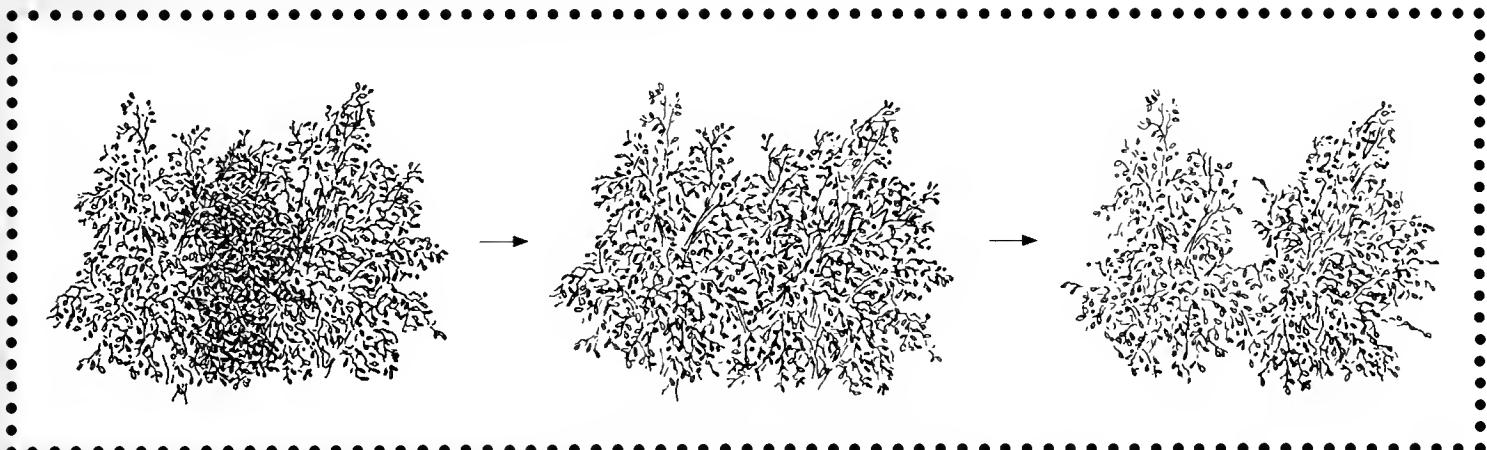
Let's start by killing the exotic woody invasives, shall we? Things like laurel, cotoneaster, holly and blackberry. Most people can agree on that. But this is not as easy as one would hope. If you *cut them to the ground*, they just grow back, with the possible exception of an old, woody scotch broom. A holly, for example, could easily outlive you, even if you cut it to the ground every other month for thirty years! Long after you've turned to dust, it will have sprung up to twenty feet and made a merry Christmas scene. *Digging a plant up*

can be way, way more work than seems worthwhile, with plenty of destruction to nearby desirables, and it can turn up a host of weed seeds, too. But, then, aren't such weeds just more native plants?

A saws-all and an eight-foot *pry bar* (which my husband calls *the tool of ignorance*—\$8 to rent, \$30 to buy) with a fulcrum might work, if it can be maneuvered into place. If you can spare \$200, you can get yourself a *weed wrench*™. They're cool. Ecological restoration workers use a \$500 Round-Up (glyphosate) *injection gun* (JK Injections) system to apply concentrate to the freshly cut stems or to inject invasives such as Japanese knotweed. I use a 99-cent, touch-up, plastic paint canister with brush in lid and 9 percent glyphosate as a *cut-stump treatment* for any and all unwanted woody brush. (Apologies to my 100% organic friends.) More information on my method is available in the "Groundcovers: Ivy removal," section of my book, "Cass Turnbull's Guide to Pruning."

So let it be a lesson to you new gardeners to patrol your garden every fall and pull these nuisances early on, when they are 1-2" tall and can be easily dispatched with a pair of pliers.

Next up, and a little harder for the native-plant novice, is removing the native invasives. Our native plants like it here. Some *really* like it here, and several are perfectly adapted to out-compete anything else you have on your property. Some are underground spreaders that are harder to stop than the



ABOVE: Thin out shrubs to improve appearance and air circulation.

ones that just have babies all over the place. In either case, you are wise to remove some of these overly aggressive native plants. I've seen salmonberry invade and conquer mossy woods and open fields with amazing success! And remember that horsetail, fireweed and crows are native. Foxglove, cattails and red-winged blackbirds aren't. It's okay to hate a native plant on your property. You can ban it from your garden; but don't worry, it is living happily someplace else nearby! In regular gardening parlance, the term *vigorous* is sometimes code for *invasive*. In restoration ecology, the term *very successful* can mean *invasive*. So listen closely to plant descriptions and choose wisely.

On the other hand, sometimes you *want* some thicket-producing natives, such as a mixed hedge of deciduous and evergreen shrubs like Oregon grape, ocean spray, red twig, hazelnut, currant and elderberry, to protect your forest edge from the invading non-natives. Or you may want a shorter, spreading thicket along your pasture fence (with plants such as snowberry and wild roses) that is kept from spreading by haying the field every year. But these same plants can run roughshod or overwhelm your front doorstep garden. You may care to remove just some or all of them, depending on the design and whether or not they are making themselves a nuisance. Sometimes the native garden has already become completely overwhelmed, and the only course left is to just surrender and pull out the losers—deleting, say, the huckleberry and sword ferns that have been totally submerged and overcome by the salal and oceanspray. Pretend you designed it that way.

In general, no more than two plants should occupy the same place. Pick two that look good together, or that offer high-low contrast, and edit out the others. A special case exists along the walkway, where the best choice is to have only low materials at the edge, with nothing too threatening or crowding at eye

level. Now that we have removed unwanted woody plants by any means necessary, let's proceed to the next job.

De-vine and Get the Brown Out

Stringy groundcovers can muck up the good looks of a mixed planting. I often delete native vines, strawberry and ankle-busting wild blackberries, or restrict them to a dedicated area of their own.

And, even more unnaturally, I am apt to hand rake (or just push down) the worst of the brown leaves and other brown stuff (dog paddle out dead fern fronds and big leaf maple leaves caught up in the shrubs and make sure the curled brown leaves under the rhododendrons are raked out of sight). Tamp down or remove dead twigs and downed branchlets that fall from your conifer in every storm. Clean the path. The finer deciduous leaves get to stay, and areas farther from view can stay completely leafed and naturally mulched. To make up for the removal of debris, I sometimes have to reapply a mulch; arborist conifer chips most closely mimic the forest floor and work to suppress weeds. If you have your own chipper, you can feel good about the short recycle cycle you use by cleaning up and then mulching with the same, but now shredded, material.

When working my way through the landscape, I leave sword ferns in the right places as I consider them to be a near perfect plant for understory in native and non-native shade gardens. Sword ferns are great to use to complete designs that have been disrupted by removing large, unwanted woody plants. I love almost all the ferns, but the maidenhair and deer ferns are especially choice and fabulous to find in a garden. But, as anybody who has worked with me can tell you, I make war on lady ferns (*Athyrium*). In my view, they have too many babies that show up inside desirable shrubs, then die back and leave the shrubs stuffed with ugly, dead and broken brown fern fronds in the winter. I hate them. I use a baby

mattock to murder each and every one I can find, with a zeal that scares even me.

Pruning

I've noticed that there is just no guilt-free living anymore. When I was a kid, I ran the sink water as I brushed my teeth, we burned piles of autumn leaves and turned over rocks on the beach to molest the marine life. And, until recently, I used to say that *deadwooding* was always good and you couldn't go wrong—that is until a lady told me she kept the dead twigs on her lilac that were the perfect size for some particular bird to build its nest. Drat! It's true! Deadwood of all sorts is good for nature. Unfortunately, deadwood looks good pruned out of our trees and tree-like shrubs. Actually, it looks really good pruned out of everything. So carry on with the deadwooding, with the knowledge that there may be some places you will choose to leave it. Then properly dispose of your gardener's guilt by composting it on

the site with all the other aforementioned dead twigs, leaves and plants.

I have written extensively about how to prune plants according to one of three basic plant habits (cane-grower, tree-like and mounding-habit), and a link on PlantAmnesty's website provides a valuable native plant list, with the plant size, relative aggressiveness and pruning habit of each, as well as the notations BBC (banned by Cass) and CPF (Cass's personal favorite). (See www.plantamnesty.org) Pruning plants for size control is largely unsuccessful for all but the briefest time. Pruning to *referee* between plants, or to make individual plants look *more attractive*, are the real goals of pruning in landscape renovation.

I can think of three common scenarios. One is when two plants of equal size are too crowded. In this case, prune some of the branches of each that are headed into the other, and do a general thinning throughout as well. Now the shrubs mingle, like two



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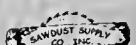


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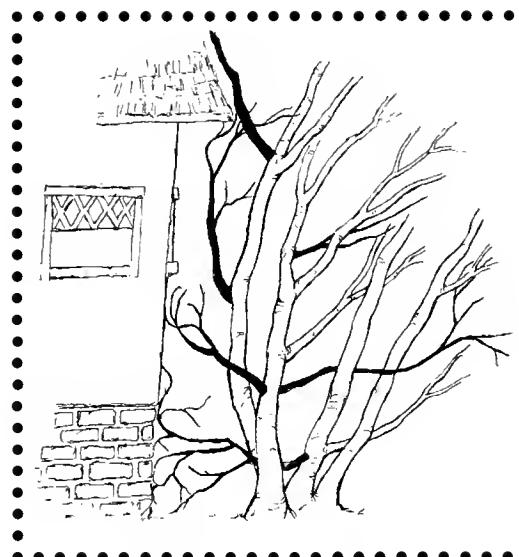


usbank

slow dancers, not barroom brawlers.

A second situation arises when two different-sized plants are too crowded. In this instance, prune off the lowest limbs of the tallest plant to accommodate the understory. For example, with a vine maple, remove its lowest limbs so the low mahonia planted under it can thrive.

Thirdly, pruning can do wonders for trees or tree-like shrubs, especially near a building. In the example of a vine maple planted next to a house, first take out the deadwood. Then prune off the branches that touch the building, if to do so does not exceed the pruning budget. (The *pruning budget* is the combination of the branch diameter and amount of foliage that can be removed without causing watersprouts, rot or dieback in any given plant. For trees, the



limit is about one-eighth to one-sixteenth of the total foliage in a given pruning cycle, which lasts from five to ten years). The thinning cut for an understory tree should not exceed about one inch, most often much less. Use other PlantAmnesty pruning guidelines just to make it all look better: Thin out crossing/rubbing, broken, diseased and wrong-way branches, but never exceed the pruning budget described above.

A Touch of Charm

By now you should be feeling pretty good about your native garden. I'm always amazed at just how much material can be removed from a garden without anyone being able to tell that it has been touched. The garden still seems natural and even lush, but now looks

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nicer, with greater depth and detail. However, before you leave well enough alone, I'd like to put in a plug for the very lowest level of greenery. Now that several of the giant shrubs are gone, you have room to put in low groundcovers, self-seeding annuals and choice perennials that can give the native plant garden that *ooo, abb* quality. So, when you can, leave some empty spaces on the forest floor, especially near the door and the walkways. You can then add a carpet of successful (wink, wink) groundcovers like oxalis or vancouveria and bleeding heart or bead ruby (false lily-of-the valley). You could salt the wood's edges with robust, self-seeding annuals like piggy back plants, lupine, or columbine. For a more delicate area of well-matched, not-too-vigorous small guys, use deer ferns, foam flowers and vanilla leaf. And for the ultimate in woodland perfection, include a few trilliums, fawn lilies and, God willing, a living patch of bunchberry!

Intervention is FINE! You can rest and be proud of your reasonable facsimile of the beautiful and wonderful wild woods. And for those of you who can't stand these sorts of strong-handed measures in your beloved native plant garden, you're in luck. It's your garden, and you can do whatever you want with it, or nothing at all, because in the end it needs only to please you. ~

CASS TURNBULL is the founder of Plant Amnesty and writes articles and books on landscape maintenance and renovation, including "Cass Turnbull's Guide to Pruning," 2005; she is a member of the "Bulletin" Editorial Board.

KATE ALLEN, a Seattle native, is the illustrator of Cass Turnbull's "Guide to Pruning" and the PlantAmnesty Newsletter. She is employed at City Peoples' Garden Store in Seattle.



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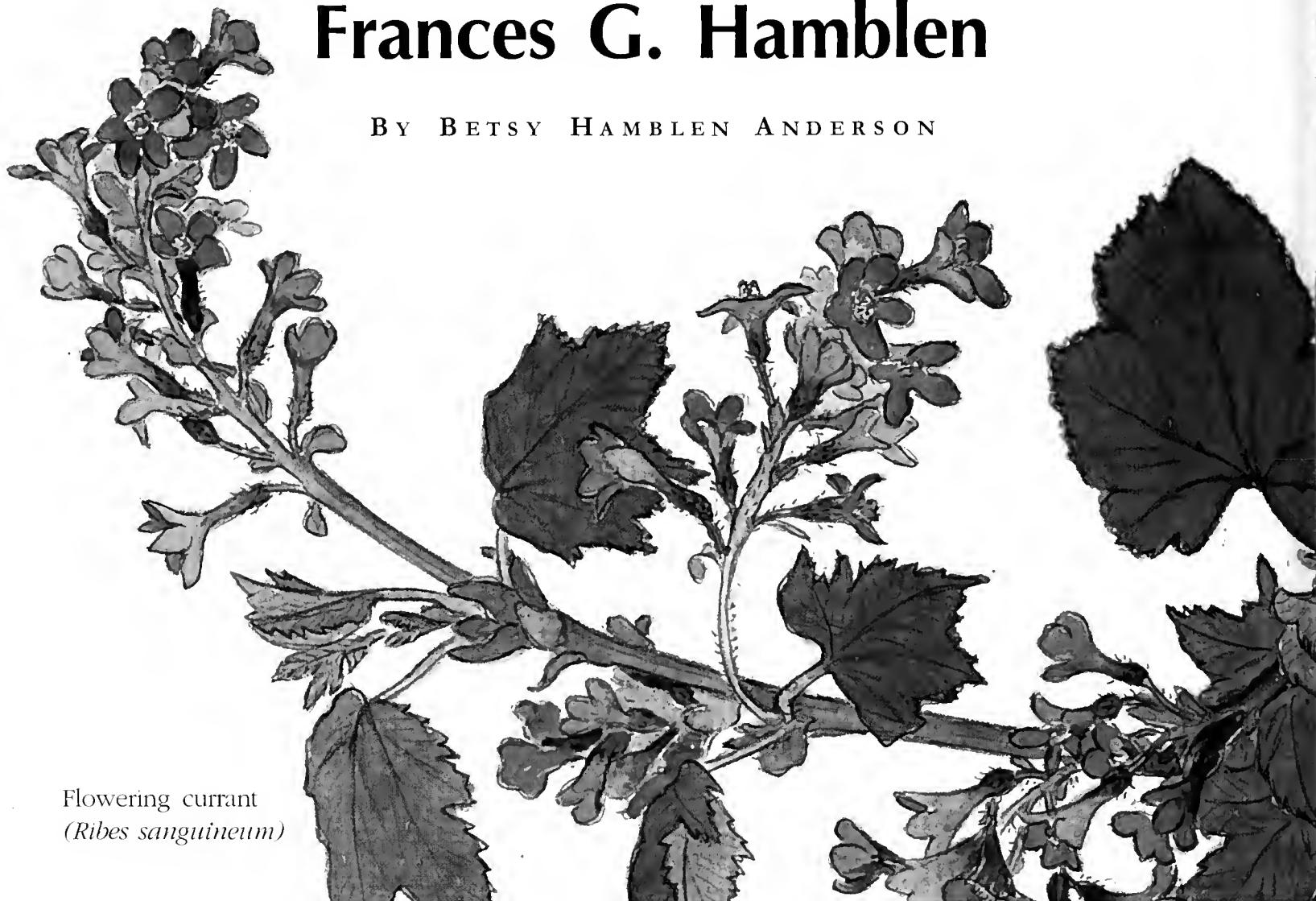
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Floral Gypsy: The Botanical Watercolors of Frances G. Hamblen

BY BETSY HAMBLEN ANDERSON



Frances Gilbert Hamblen came west with the railroad as a young girl and lived long enough to trace the remote landscape she loved from behind the wheel of a motorcar. She would embrace both train and automobile as a means to carry her nearer to nature and the native plants that she made her life's study. When she died in 1950, she left behind a collection of watercolors, notes and pressed herbarium specimens for a book on Northwest flora that she hoped would enrich the travels of like-minded botanical wanderers.

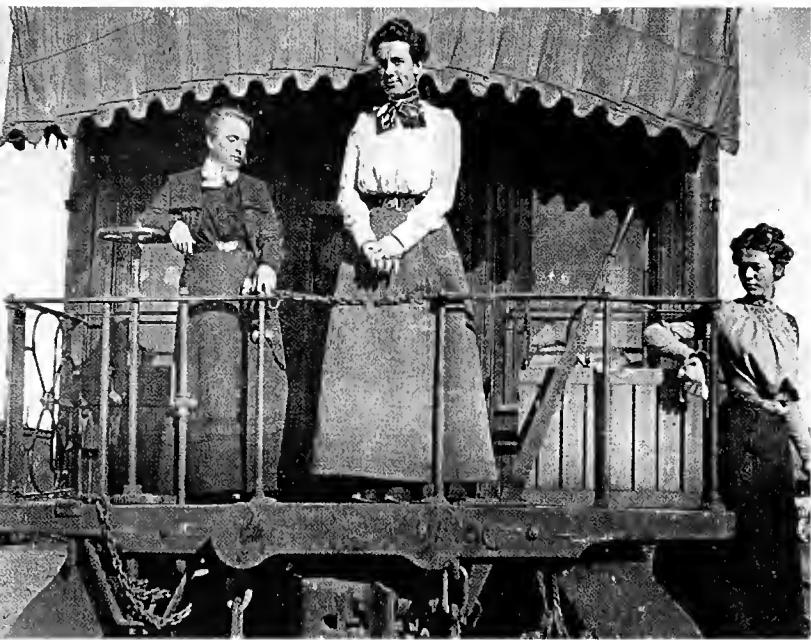
A 1935 article in the Spokane "Spokesman-Review" explains her intention: "What could be more stimulating each year than to motor across the state when thousands of acres turn blue under the soft haze of lupine; or when

grass widows float their delicate star flowers from their spiked stems, over carpets of red brown pine needles; or brown-faced sunflowers with their yellow petals ablaze through the brown barked pines... Mrs. Hamblen's idea is that with motor transportation linking the northwest so closely together, motorists discover a flower and want to know what it is. Therefore her idea is to compile a "Who's Who" on flowers for their benefit."

The book was never published, but the detailed color plates she prepared, along with her collection notes, are a testament to the life of a woman the newspaper described as a "floral gypsy...who followed wild bloom as it unfolded in the various flora belts of the Northwest in Washington, Idaho, Montana and Oregon."



ABOVE LEFT: Avalanche lily (*Erythronium grandiflorum*). **LOWER LEFT:** Grass widow (*Olsynium douglasii*). **ABOVE RIGHT:** Gum plant (*Grindelia integrifolia* var. *macrophylla*). **LOWER RIGHT:** *Gilia capitata*



LEFT: Frances Gilbert (right) and her sister Olive (center) on their father's private car on the Northern Pacific Railroad. (All photographs are in the collection of the author's family) **RIGHT:** Frances G. Hamblen and her husband, Laurence, at their summer home on Lake Pend Oreille. Mrs. Hamblen was famous for stopping the train en route to collect wildflowers.

Born in Rutherford, New Jersey in 1879, Frances Gilbert arrived with her family in Spokane after a peripatetic early childhood spent in one railroad town after another. Her father's position with the railroad—first the Erie, then the Northern Pacific—led them from the Northeast to Minnesota, then west to stops in Oregon, Montana, Idaho and Washington, before finally settling above the Spokane River in 1891. Frederick Gilbert's rise to superintendent in the Northern Pacific Railway Company had secured for his family an upper-middle-class lifestyle; his wife Adelaide was careful to give her children every opportunity, including lessons in music and art for her daughters, Olive and Frances (called "Ollie" and "Frankie" in Adelaide's letters home to her parents in New York).

Adelaide Gilbert's passion for cultivating houseplants doubtless influenced her younger daughter's botanical leanings: "Frankie has carried up to grow in the attic windows no less than a bushel of buttercups," Adelaide recounts in an 1892 letter. Buttercups would remain a favorite subject, as evidenced by Frances Hamblen's 1946 article in the "Washington Park Arboretum Bulletin," entitled "Buttercups of the Pacific Northwest." "They are so simple, so familiar that we are likely to

take them for granted," she writes, but she goes on to describe their significance as a progenitor of other species: "The buttercup is considered by botanists as the beginning..." She argues their importance to Northwest plant lovers in particular, noting the great natural abundance of the buttercup genus, *Ranunculus*, in our region: "In my own amateur herbarium I think I have thirty species, plus many 'perplexers.' "

She then leads a tour of *Ranunculus* the world over from the *R. glacialis* of Lapland to the snow buttercup, *R. eschscholtzii*, of western mountain ranges, to the sagebrush buttercup, *R. glaberrimus*, of central Washington, weaving a detailed botanist's account with history and folklore and always drawing back to the landscape and flora she knew and loved: "No sets of figures, no glamorous adjectives about the flowers in other lands can mar the love for the flowers of home." She shared these western plants with all who wanted to read or listen, from periodical subscribers and garden clubs in Washington, Oregon and Idaho to the group of women with whom she searched for wildflowers (dubbed "the floral vagabonds") to the children she led on botany walks through the pine woods and dry hills.



LEFT: Frances Gilbert sculpting as a girl. **RIGHT:** Frances G. Hamblen (right) with another “floral vagabond” collecting wildflowers, 1945. The group of women also called themselves the “Rover Girls,” and combed the countryside for interesting plants.

A wildflower guidebook she prepared for her granddaughter gives an inkling of what such walks might have been like. Of the wild phloxes she writes, “The tall Phlox is often miscalled ‘sweet William,’ but that is an entirely different flower. We would not like to be called ‘Susie’ when our name is ‘Lucy,’ just because we looked a little bit like Susie.”

In the same illustrated manual she describes *Lomatium gormanii*, the “salt and pepper flower,” noting that “The little flowers look like bits of salt with a dash of pepper; as the tiny petals fall it looks as if someone had spilled salt from your bouquet...The family name is Umbelliferae, and the umbel comes from the same old word that umbrella does...Examine the Salt and Pepper flower and you can see that it is like an umbrella blown inside out, with its cover gone, and with a little bunch of flowers at the end of each spoke.”

Lomatium hambleniae, Hamblen’s biscuit-root, was discovered by Frances Hamblen on a ledge of scab-rock at Dry Falls, Grand Coulee in 1941. The desertparsleys were always of great interest to her, and her family liked to joke that she attained recognition through the “lowly parsley.”

Wife of a prominent Spokane attorney and mother of three children, Mrs. L. R. Hamblen

(as her name appeared in print) was a largely self-taught botanist. As a young woman, she befriended the celebrated naturalist John Burroughs—who traveled with her family from Yellowstone National Park to North Idaho—and showed the essayist where to find the Calypso orchid (*Calypso bulbosa*) that grows around Lake Coeur d’Alene. The year was 1903, and Burroughs had been invited west by President Theodore Roosevelt to see the grandeur of the first national parks for himself. In a letter to Roosevelt the same year, Burroughs described his visit to Spokane and environs: “The Gilbert family (you saw the two girls in Livingston) have been more than kind to me. They are NY state people to whom life in the West has imparted something of that large sunny ebullient quality that you know so well.” The two girls, Frankie and Ollie, would remain friends with Burroughs until his death in 1921.

Like Burroughs, Frances Hamblen viewed the world as a naturalist, finding beauty and value in plants and landscapes often ignored by others. In a 1947 contribution to the Arboretum “Bulletin,” entitled “Treasures of the Scabland-Coulee Region,” Hamblen details the plant life of the basalt knuckles and dry, braided channels that stitch themselves through the middle part

continues on page 29

WINTER TREES



Ask any dedicated gardener about winter, and a poet will emerge. Ideas will roll out with grandiloquent resonance, yet seem as delicate and sensitive as December wind through pine needles:

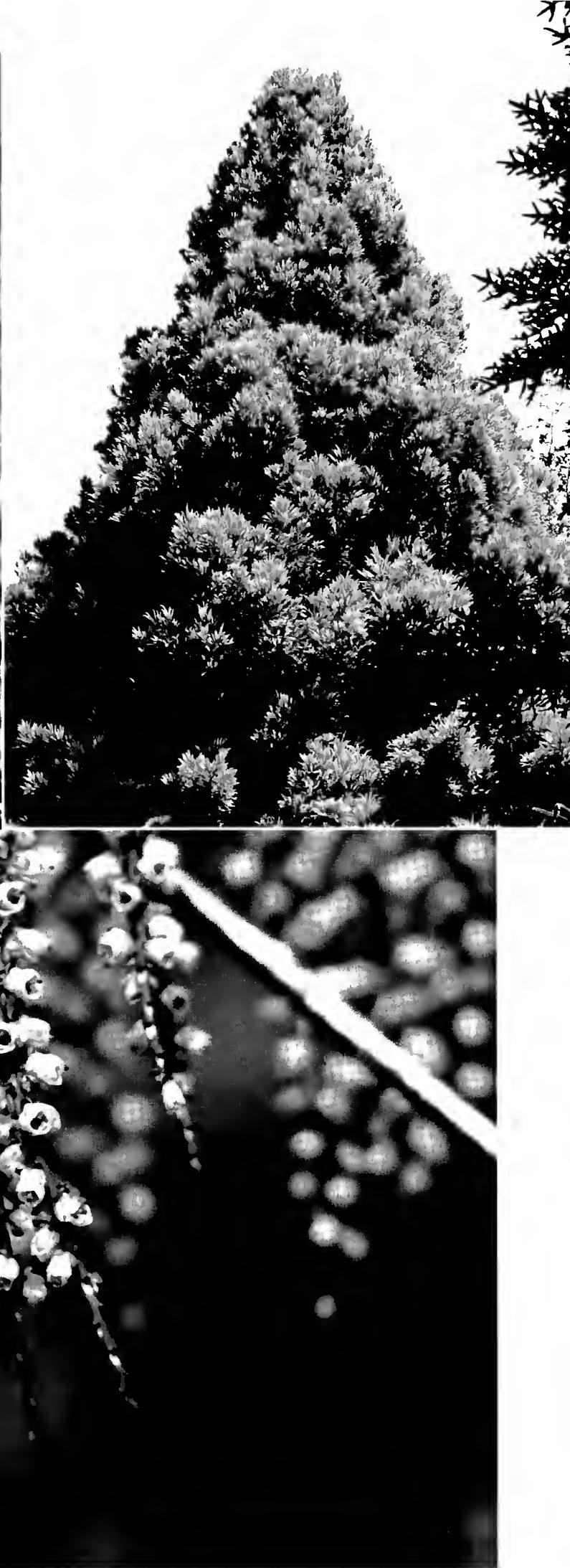
- ~ "There's a surreal magic to the mist hanging in the trees."
- ~ "The low light of this latitude casts long, pensive shadows."
- ~ "I'd rather look at frost plating a leaf than see anything Tiffany or Cartier could create."
- ~ "Nothing matches the filigree of naked branches
against the gently tarnished silver of a winter sky."

There's something about the short days, the metallic horizon, the chill and damp, the emptiness of winter, that stirs a tranquility, a serenity in us that the opulence of a Pacific Northwest spring, summer or autumn keeps subdued. There is form, texture and color in winter that the other seasons cannot match. And nothing in the garden responds more dramatically than trees.

Step out into your garden. Look across to the tree trunks and up to the branches, and you'll know. It's as simple as that.

ABOVE: *Hamamelis x intermedia 'Diane'* (Photograph in the collection of the Great Plant Picks program, Elisabeth Miller Botanical Garden)

BY STEVE LORTON



ABOVE: *Stachyurus praecox* (Great Plant Picks) INSET: *Cryptomeria japonica 'Sekkan-sugi'* (Photograph by Richie Steffen)

When we talk about “the bones of the garden,” it starts with the trees. What pulls the eye to the back of the garden? Trees. Standing tall, trees top the garden and canopy the beds, whether in leaf or out. They put everything else in perspective. They are the upper end of garden scale.

Everyone has favorites. Still, it's almost safe to say there isn't a tree without virtues in our darkest season. But if you're thinking about adding a tree to enhance your winter landscape, think of it as you would any other plant. Choose it for form, texture, and even color. It all seems to boil down to needles, branches, bark and the unexpected gift of winter bloom.

Here are a few favorites:

Conifers

To draw the eye to the back or top of the garden, screen a view, create a monumental focal point, or establish a background, conifers are unbeatable. The gentle climate of the Pacific Northwest presents us with a Picasso palette of colorful and richly textured conifers.

Need light in the winter garden? Go for gold and yellow. The Miller Botanical Garden's “Great Plant Picks” program touts the virtues of *Cryptomeria japonica* 'Sekkan-sugi'. Its creamy yellow tips give the appearance of being bathed in sunlight—in rain or shine, or in between. Nurseries seem to offer new and exciting *Cryptomeria* cultivars by the dozen each season. In addition to color, their needles bring a softness to the garden that plays well against broad-leaved evergreens and bare branches. The old warhorse *C. japonica* 'Elegans' has secured its place in the heart of gardeners for good reason. Its puffs of foliage are lime green in spring, age to dark green over summer, turn brilliant coppery in autumn and become a dark, rich purple in winter. Sometimes hues of green, orange and puce paint the same plant from November through March.

Some years ago Dan Hinkley offered

gardeners a golden cedar that is still available, *Thuja plicata* 'Zebrina'. The oldest foliage on the branches is a deep, cedar green. But the brilliant tips seem to last several growing seasons, extending the color from a deep, rich gold that gradually softens to a yellow at the very end. This is a spectacular plant that stands up to summer heat and drought, and winter chill, without foliage burn.

For a tower of blue to pair with winter greens or colorful bare branches, the offerings are equally opulent. The timber-sized *Abies concolor* 'Candicans' will eventually fill the corner of any garden with its electric blue needles. *Chamaecyparis pisifera* 'Boulevard' is a little darker and smaller, and takes to pruning well—producing fluffy plumes of foliage. For a dry spot, consider *Juniperus scopulorum* 'Witchita Blue'. The offerings are many, sometimes to the point of being confounding. Visit the Arboretum, scout nurseries, ask questions, and spend time thinking before you make your choice.

Cones play a part in enlivening winter gardens. Probably none are as showy as the tight, but rather large, deep-purple cones of *Abies koreana*. The four-inch or longer cones appear in clusters and stand up vertically on the stout branches.

Our native Noble fir (*Abies procera*) is a good candidate for the rear of a large garden. Depending on the plant, it can be dark green or a somewhat silvery, greenish blue. The branches extend almost horizontally and are generously spaced, going up the trunk so that light pours through them. A gardener in the Upper Skagit Valley grows this plant in a west and south-facing grove of five, with *Cotoneaster franchetii* planted between and somewhat to the back of the fir grove. As the cotoneasters grow, they stretch up for light. The gardener then pulls the branches through the fir boughs. The green leaves are almost unnoticeable, but when the white blooms appear, the fir's lower limbs are embellished with flower clusters. And through much of the winter, bright-orange

fruits decorate the needles. Tucked into the fir branches, the fruits put on a winter-long show. The berries seem not to be eaten by birds and, when somewhat protected from rain, keep their color and tend not to get soft and squishy.

Branches and bark

When it comes to cold-season theatrics, no plant upstages coral bark maple (*Acer palmatum* 'Sango Kaku'). Planted so that its vibrant-red branches are backed by green, blue or gold, you'll have a combination that is high Kabuki. A grove of Himalayan white birches (*Betula utilis* ssp. *jacquemontii*), with their snow-white trunks limbed up high, slices winter doldrums with strong, vertical lines. Or consider *Betula albosinensis*, one of China's many horticultural gifts to the world. The trunk is clad in pinks, coppers, browns, powdery grays and creams. These handsome trees, with the trunks that seem to mimic sunsets, can be seen in the Arboretum's Winter Garden right now. In fact, if you've not been to the winter garden recently, drop everything and go. It is rhapsodic.

Legendary gardener Jane Platt, of Portland, dotted her garden with the elegantly scaled paperbark maple (*Acer griseum*) and paperbark cherry (*Prunus serrula*). The naked branches of the maple angle out and up like movements in a piece of Martha Graham choreography—and those of the cherry stretch up and away from the trunk, resembling the arms of Evita Peron on the balcony of the Casa Rosada. The trunks of both are a deep and glistening, reddish bronze, and their pealing bark hangs on in large sheets. Mrs. Platt positioned these trees where they'd be hit by low winter light at sunrise and sunset. "When the winter sun shines through that flaking bark, it glows like garnets," she was quick to tell visitors.

The mottled bark on *Stewartia pseudocamellia* and its variety *koreana*, with its variations of green, gray, brown, rust, terra cotta and cream can't be left off the list of winter bark beauties, nor can the smooth

cinnamon trunk and limbs of *Stewartia monadelpha*.

Flowers and fragrance

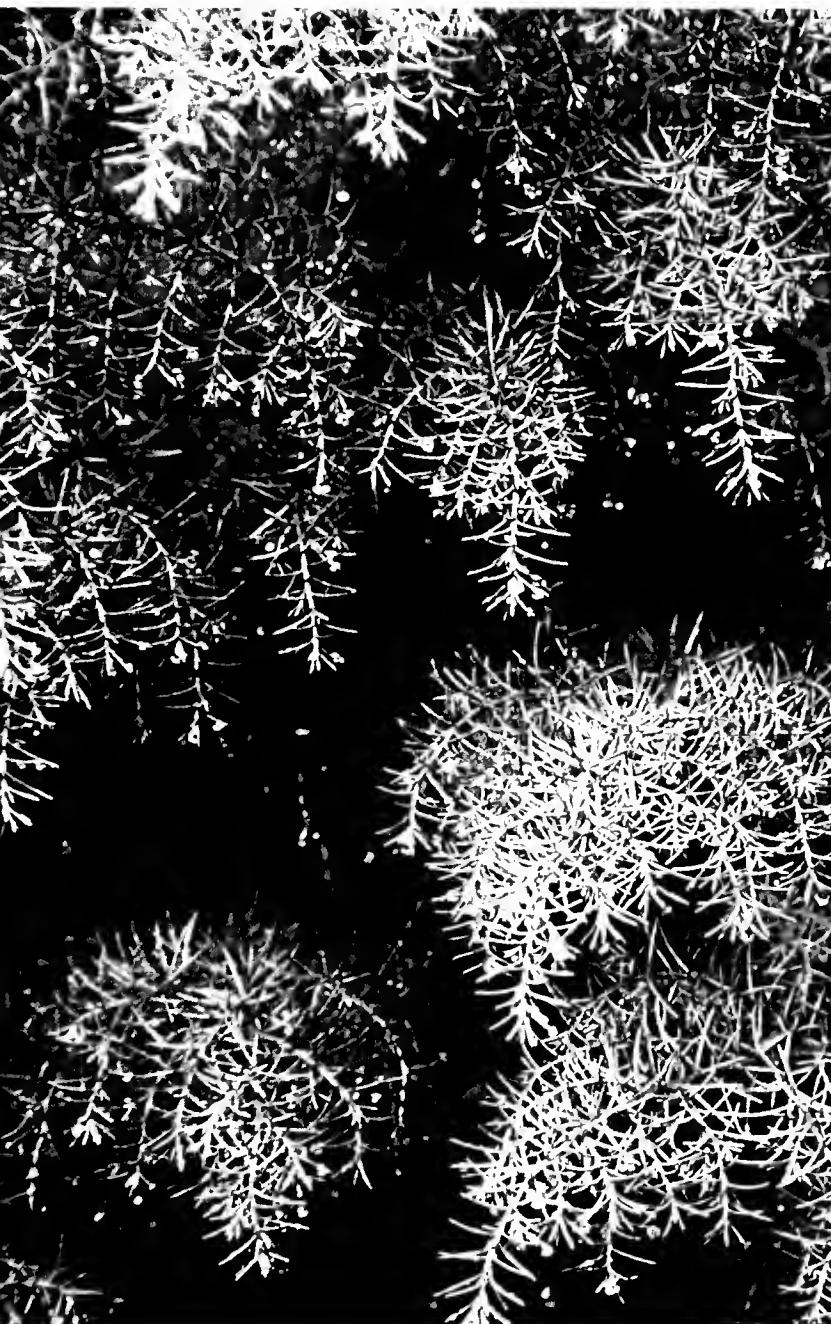
As for winter bloom, there isn't a lot, but what we do have is beautiful and often richly scented. After all, it takes a strong perfume to entice an insect out to pollinate in our chilly winter weather.

Northwest garden writer Val Easton has rightly won national fame for her grounded, yet upbeat, assessments of garden-worthy plants. She's pragmatic and balanced. But ask her about *Azara microphylla* and *A. microphylla* 'Variegata', and the flood gates open: "I love the tiny leaves of *Azara microphylla*. They're deep green as yew but with a totally different texture. The plant's narrow shape can be shoehorned into the littlest garden and best of all, its vanilla-scented yellow flowers in February show up beautifully against the dark green leaves. If you have a dark spot, *A. microphylla* 'Variegata' will light it up with its cream-splashed leaves." So enamored of this plant is Val, that when asked to design her own daughter's garden, she made certain there was one in the plan.

Chinese witch hazels (*Hamamelis mollis*) and the Asian hybrid (*H. x intermedia*) have brought color, fragrance and sheer joy to winter gardens for over a century. Newer introductions like 'Diane', with its dark-red tassel flowers, can be planted next to other winter dazzlers like flaming barked *Cornus sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire'. Take one look at that combination and you'll ask yourself, who needs summer?

Witch hazel doesn't have the market cornered on winter yellow. Cornelian cherry (*Cornus mas*) is a massive bouquet of sulphur. And the pendulous flower stalks of *Stachyurus praecox* dangle down from the branches like swags of tiny chandelier crystals when the sun hits them.

When it comes to the poetry of the winter garden, barely a stanza has been written here.

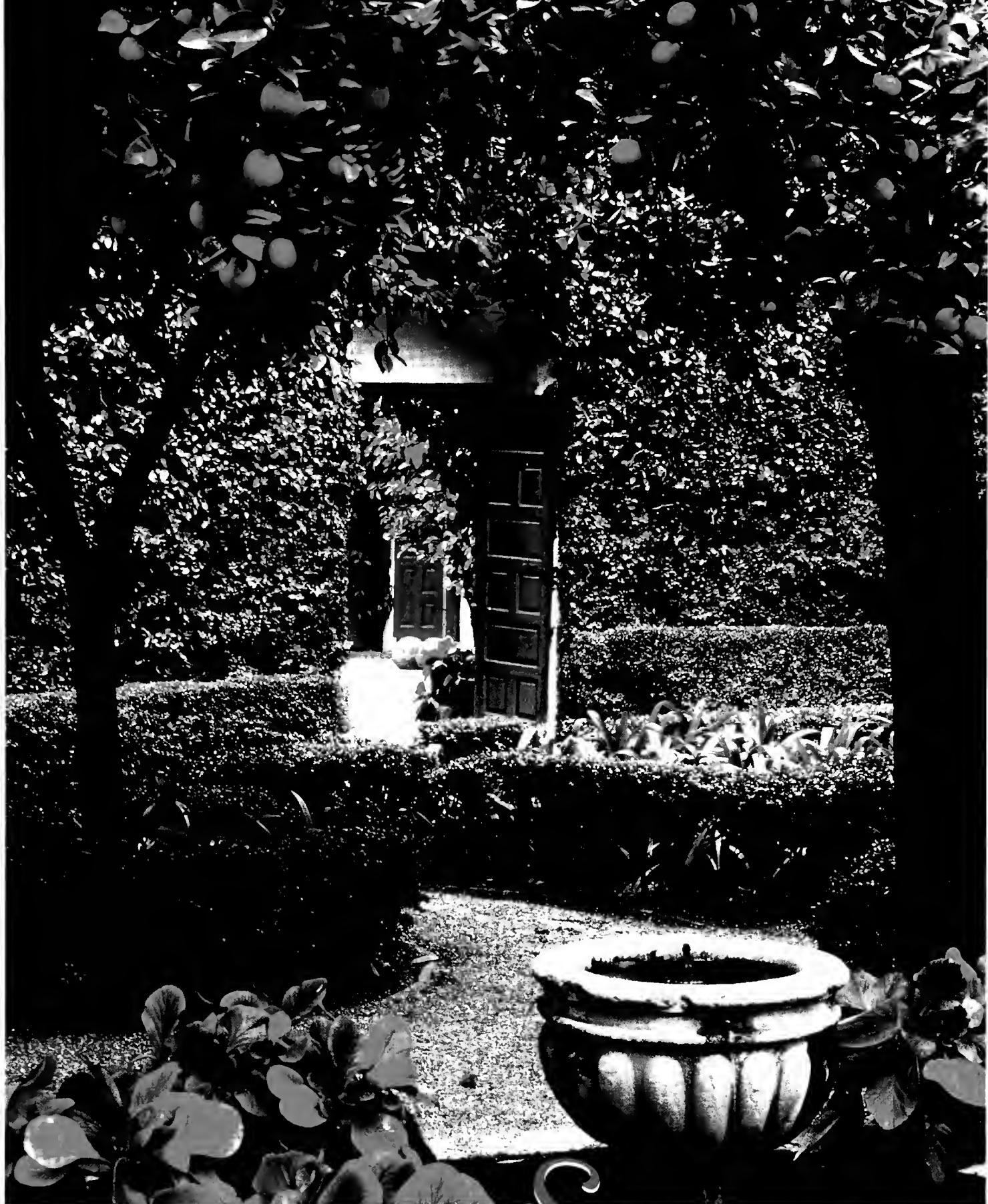


There are volumes. Should you doubt it, look out in your garden. If what you see doesn't fill you with wonder—if you don't feel the rhyme and meter of nature—go to a nursery and buy a plant, or two or three. The cool, damp days of this season are perfect for getting plants in the ground. Take them home and put them in. Immediate gratification! Step back. Take a good look. The poet deep inside you is waiting to emerge. ~



STEVE LORTON is a member of the "Bulletin" Editorial Board and the retired Pacific Northwest editor of "Sunset."

LEFT: *Cryptomeria japonica 'Elegans'* (Great Plant Picks) **RIGHT:** the bark of *Stewartia monadelpha* (Photograph by Richie Steffen)



GARDENS *IN* SPAIN...

BY JAN K. WHITNER

*T*he south of Spain's history is a vibrant blend of Roman, Moorish and European influences. This region is known as Andalucía—a name derived from the Arabic term *al andaluz*, meaning “the land of light,” which is variously explained as a reference to the vigor of its intellectual life or the quality of its sunlight. Gardens are among Andalucía's chief glories; they

ABOVE: Palacio de Viane, Cordoba

distill the region's cultural essence into living works of art. Defined by narrow water channels and delicately scalloped arches, spilling over with orange trees, jasmine, cypresses and roses, and made musical by the sound of water dripping from fountains, Andalucian gardens have dreamed away centuries basking under the fierce Mediterranean sun. The region is strewn with evidence of its history—and those ancient remnants often are displayed to their best advantage in gardens.

The Romans colonized much of present-day Spain by the first century B.C.E., and the residences they built featured atria—rooms sited in the center of the building, open to the sky and ornamented with pools, fountains, statues and plants. Atria permit a seamless integration between indoor and outdoor living spaces, and modern Spain's signature patios and courtyards derive, in part, from this ancient architectural feature. Such southern cities as Seville, Cordoba and Malaga flourished under Roman rule, and columns, arches and statues dating from this period still ornament their gardens and public squares today.

Roman power in Spain waned over several centuries, during which time a series of barbarian groups from northern and eastern Europe invaded in succession, setting up ephemeral kingdoms. When the Visigoths—relatively sophisticated tribesman who invaded in the fifth century—founded a more long-lasting state, they readily adapted to many aspects of Spain's long-established, Roman-influenced culture. Although they contributed little to the region as far as garden architecture is concerned, the Visigoths converted to Christianity and built several basilicas, based on Roman architectural styles, that later were used as foundations for Moorish mosques, palaces and gardens. An attractive horseshoe-shaped arch, ornamented with bands of buff stone and red brick or paint, is commonly considered a Visigothic introduction and still is seen today in mosques, churches, palaces, courtyards and gardens throughout the region.

The Moors swept from North Africa into southern Spain in the early eighth century and overthrew the Visigoths. For some 700 years, their successive dynasties—each with a distinctive architectural style—ruled in Andalucía. The various Moorish dynasties contributed, in aggregate, a tradition of garden architecture that is centered (like its Roman counterpart) on patios or courtyards, is comfortably and domestically human in scale, and is decorated with exquisite details. Although Granada's Alhambra and Generalife are the most famous examples of Moorish architecture in Spain, a visitor sees Moorish accents—such as rectilinear reflecting pools, colorful ceramic tiles, and stucco wall decorations as exquisite as frothed lace—in many other regional gardens.

As richly as Andalucian culture flourished under Rome and the Moors, the region entered a new golden age in the 16th century—when resurgent European rule and the imported wealth of the New World altered but did not fundamentally transform it. Plants from all corners of the globe began to appear in this sea-faring nation's newly established botanical gardens, while the pleasure grounds of nobles and kings displayed the era's tendencies toward grandeur, opulence and spectacle. By the 17th century, Spain entered a long period of political, economic and social decline, but its gardens still remain as rich embodiments of southern Spain's artistic and cultural heritage.

• Seville

My husband Steve and I visited Andalucía—including Cordoba, Granada, Malaga and Seville—in the winter of 2007. Our principle interests were gardens, churches and Moorish architecture, and the weather—which was cool but sunny—allowed us plenty of time to walk through the region's almost-deserted gardens. Although many plants already were dormant, we enjoyed the scents of jasmine blooms and roses that were lingering past their prime. In particular, whole neighborhoods of Seville seemed drenched in the spicy-sweet odor of

oranges, which hung in bright clusters on thousands of trees planted in the city's famous plazas and parks.

Seville's premier public garden, the Real Alcazar, combines architecture, plants and ornamentation in a way that best embodies southern Spain's approach to making gardens—an approach based on a unique aesthetic derived from a deep historical consciousness. Seville is a port city whose history is Andalucía's, writ small: It was founded in the mists of time by native Iberians and then occupied in turn by Phoenicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans and Visigoths; the Moors invaded in 712, and for the next five hundred years they expanded and revitalized the already ancient city, leaving palaces, mosques and splendid gardens as their legacy. In 1248 the city was claimed by Spanish kings, who presided over four centuries of intense commercial and artistic activity that was fueled by the conquest and exploitation of the New World. By the late 17th century, Seville entered a decline that endured into the 20th century. But the Real Alcazar flourished as the heart of the city through many of those centuries.

• A Succession of Palaces

The Real Alcazar is a 40-acre compound of palaces, courtyards and gardens that occupies a site on the banks of the Guadalquivir River in present-day downtown Seville. The Romans built a fortress and barracks there by the first century B.C.E. and constructed aqueducts and underground water channels to bring in water from a chain of mountains to the east of the city. In the fourth century, a basilica was erected on the same site; it remained in use under the Visigoths but was razed by the Moors in 844.

The Moors built a governor's headquarters on the basilica ruins early in the 10th century and used a large space adjoining the buildings for an orchard. Moorish orchardists, at this time, traditionally planted almonds, peaches, apricots, pomegranates and date palms. (Citrus trees, so prevalent in Spain

today, only arrived there in the 11th century via China and the Middle East.) Herbs such as rosemary, lavender, sage, oregano, saffron and thyme typically were planted under the trees for medicinal and culinary use.

Successive Moorish dynasties gradually expanded the original buildings and added courtyards and gardens, transforming the government headquarters into a palatial residence for the ruling families. Today's Real Alcazar displays a few architectural remnants from this period, including some of the buildings' outside walls and one small indoor courtyard, complete with original wall decorations dating to the 12th century.

• Walled Edens

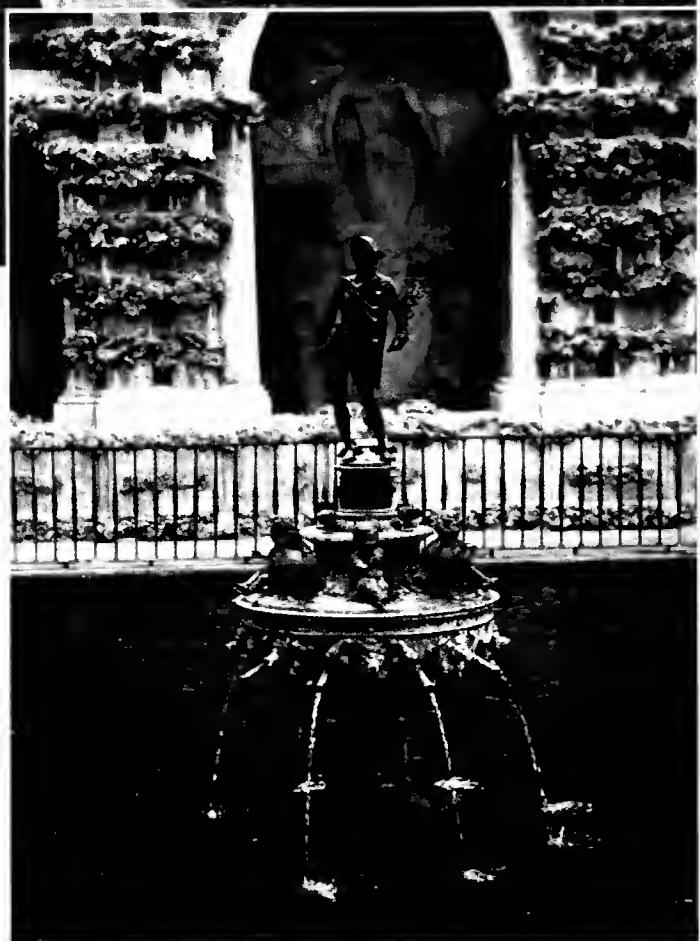
The Moorish palace included several courtyard gardens, sited within the living quarters, that featured elevated walkways and rectangular pools. (By the 11th century, the Moorish rulers had restored the Roman aqueducts and water channels—which had been derelict since the fifth century—to bring irrigation to the Real Alcazar's gardens.) Modern architects have renovated some of the Real Alcazar's interior courtyards to appear as they might have during the later Moorish period. One of them, the Court of the Damsels (Patio de las Doncellas), features a bisected garden sunk some two and one-half feet below the level of the central reflecting pool. The Moors sank the gardens to conserve irrigation water, which would have flowed into them from the central pool via wooden water shunts that could be opened and closed. Today, the patio features a carpet of violets (*Viola odorata*) planted under several Seville, or bitter, orange trees (*Citrus aurantium*).

Large alcoves rim the central pool, their lacy arabesque arches providing shade from the sun while admitting cooling breezes. When the courtyards were used by the Moorish rulers' households, the alcoves would have been made comfortable with rugs and pillows thrown over the marble pavement floors. The reflecting pool inverts images of the courtyard's pillars



and arches, thereby bringing the sky down into the walled enclosure and making it seem spacious and unconfined. When these gardens were privately used, fragrant heaps of jasmine flowers, rose petals and crushed aromatic herbs would have filled large copper bowls, while ceramic platters would have held sugared almonds, pastries and fruits. Courtyards were the traditional site for musical performances; they also served as informal gathering places for friends to converse, recite poetry and enjoy the moon and stars in the night sky, once the heat of the day had abated.

In the Moorish period, the carpet of flowers under the orange trees might have included more species than the present-day violets. Iris, roses, lilies, lilacs, tulips and narcissus probably added their colors and fragrance to the mix. Middle Eastern garden lore says tortoises with candles on their backs were sent to lumber through tulip beds at night, illuminating the petals from underneath with their flickering,



swaying lights. Might such events have happened in the Court of the Damsels 800 years ago?

The delicate stuccowork that still decorates the pillars and walls of the Court of the Damsels today is based upon authentic Moorish styles and materials, but it was added only after the Moors had been driven from Seville in the mid-

ABOVE: Patio de las Doncellas **INSET:** Jardin del Estanque Mercurio



13th century by invading Spanish kings. These Christian kings were so enamored of the beauty of the palace the Moors left behind that they preserved much of what was already there and built their own later expansions in the Moorish style. The Spanish kings hired Moorish artisans from cities, such as Granada, that were still held by emirates, to create masterworks made from tiles and stucco to decorate their renovated and expanded palaces. The artistic and architectural style these artisans developed—an amalgam of Moorish and European materials and artistic motifs—is called *mudejar*. Numerous regional gardens today still display *mudejar* touches.

• Later Additions

The complex of gardens that adjoins the palace of the Real Alcazar today was, for the most part, built after the Spanish kings took possession. Unlike the Moorish courtyards (as typified by the Court of the Damsels), these later-built gardens were not sited within the palace itself;

rather they were built as a series of “rooms” adjoining the palace’s exterior south and east walls. Their rectangular or square shapes, divided by walls and connected by relatively narrow doors, hint at Roman and Moorish architectural underpinnings, but much of their present decoration was added in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, when *mudejar* style was on the wane and the Italian Mannerist style became popular. In the 19th and early 20th centuries, more grounds were developed beyond these core garden rooms; they were, in tune with the times, styled in the Romantic manner.

Today there are some 13 garden rooms or areas adjoining the Real Alcazar, each bearing its own name, style and history. Among the highlights is the Garden of the Pool of Mercury (Jardin del Estanque de Mercurio). In the 1570s, a cast of the god Mercury was added to a large, square water tank located in this garden, which is sited right next to the palace walls. (Water tanks have an honored place in

ABOVE: Jardin de las Danzas.

the history of Iberian garden architecture. They appear in Roman and Moorish gardens and serve multiple functions—as water reservoirs, fishing ponds and bathing pools. Early documents describing such tanks mention that pleasure features such as trellises and viewing pavilions were often built next to them.) Several generations later, the wall behind the water tank was decorated with paintings of mythological characters surrounded by rough ashlar stonework. During this period, grand gardens often were decorated with features replicating caves and grottoes; sometimes shells, mother-of-pearl and semi-precious stones were added to them to evoke underwater caverns. Here there are hints of such decorated grottoes built into the wall.

An 18th century staircase leads from the Pool of Mercury to another major garden room—the Garden of Dances (Jardin de las Danzas). It centers on a polygonal pool with a 16th century bronze water spout; the tiles on the benches are abstract in design and

recall *mudejar* patterns that—as the Qur'an requires—avoid representations of human or animal forms. The garden contains hidden jets that suddenly would spout water to drench unsuspecting visitors. (Our ancestors seem to have enjoyed jokes of this kind enormously, but the custom, sad to say, no longer survives.) Myrtle shrubs that surround the pool were shaped during the 16th and 17th centuries into dancing nymphs and satyrs, complete with clay or wood heads and arms. Water jets in these shrubberies were adjusted to dance up and down on garden breezes, giving the garden its name. A nearby room of the same period, the Garden of the Galley (Jardin de la Galera), featured ships shaped from myrtle bushes that shot jets of water at each other as if they were in naval combat. (Such artifices as water jets, frescoed walls and “underwater” caverns were common in gardens built in the Italian Mannerist style—a school of garden architecture devoted to grand gestures and theatrical effects).



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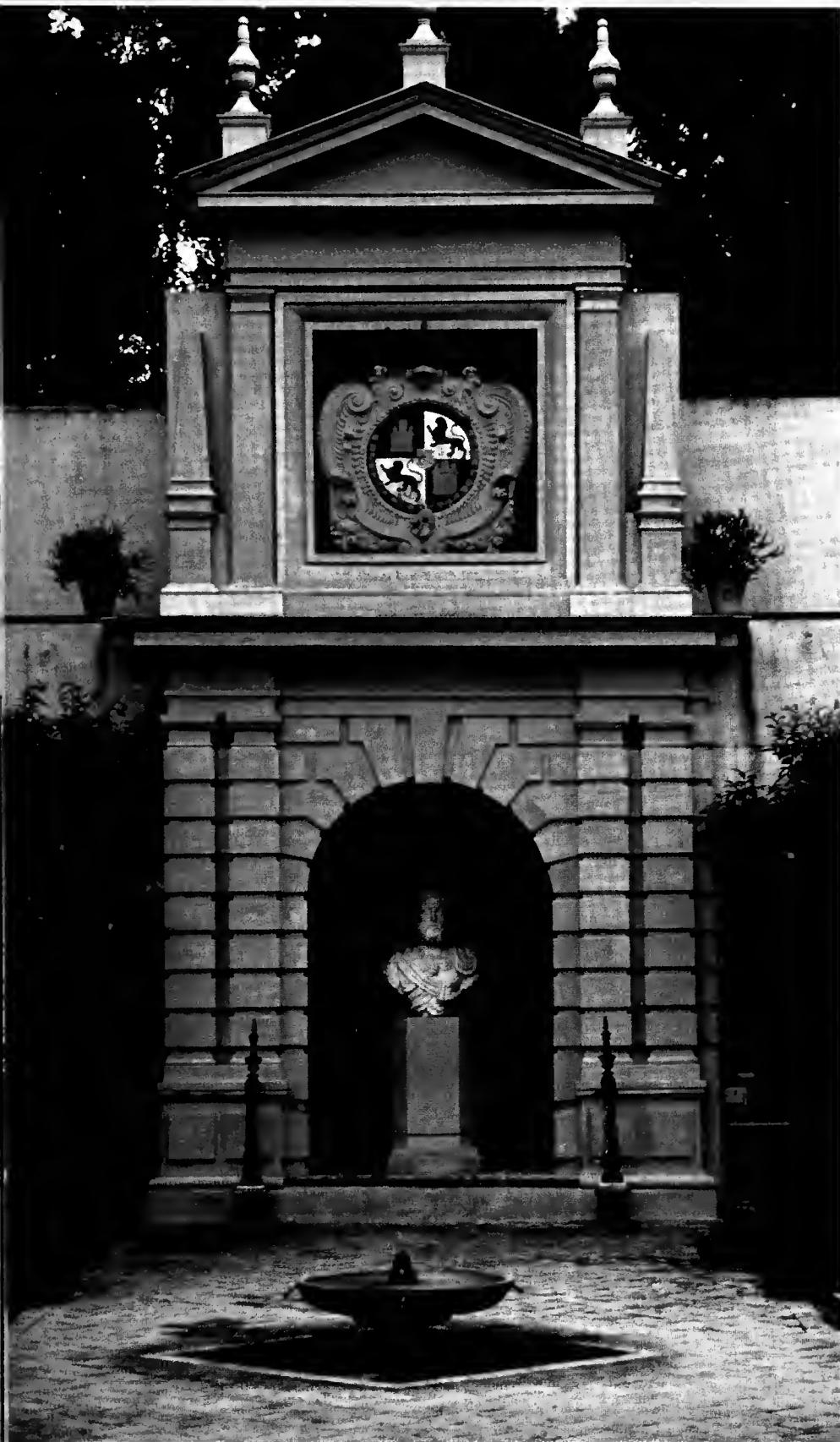
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The largest room in this complex, the Garden of Flowers (Jardin de las Flores), features a Mannerist alcove ornamented by the bust of a Roman emperor, surmounted by the insignia of the Spanish kings. Its parterres are filled with a rich jumble of plants, many of which (including persimmons, palms, junipers, yews, magnolias, cypresses, roses and dahlias)

facing the garden. The alcove is a copy of the one in the Alcazar of Seville, which was destroyed in 1734. The original alcove was built by the Moors in the 13th century. The plants in the garden were

were imported from North Africa and the Near East by the Moors. The walls surrounding the jardin are colored lemon yellow and sherbet orange. These wall colors, and the colors of the tiles that decorate the benches and stairs, keep the garden looking fresh in both the sunniest times in the summer (when few flowers are in bloom), and in the grayest days in winter, when foliage has, for the most part, disappeared. Such decorative features make the Garden of Flowers and the adjoining courtyard gardens enjoyable to visit the year around.

• Other Andalucian Gardens

The distinctively Andalucian flavor of Seville's Real Alcazar lives in many other regional gardens, as well. Besides Granada's famous Alhambra and Generalife, southern Spain offers a rich assortment of gardens that are open to the public. Here are some intriguing ones, listed by location:

• Cordoba

Jardines del Alcazar de los Reyes Cristianos: A ninth-century Moorish tower dominates grounds of cypress, myrtles and orange trees bordering a long reflective pool. Roman mosaics and Moorish baths are displayed around the grounds, testifying to the site's ancient origins. This garden was used by Ferdinand and Isabella during their reconquest of Andalucía; later it served as the headquarters of the Inquisition, until 1821.

Mesquita: Originally a Visigothic basilica, then a glorious Arab mosque, it became a Christian cathedral following the reconquest. The adjoining Courtyard of Oranges (Patio de

ABOVE: Jardin de las Flores

los Naranjos) features Moorish ablution pools, access to original Visigothic arches, and *mudejar* decorations. The patterned grove of orange trees, for which the courtyard is named, was planted in the 15th century; Moorish-inspired water channels provide their irrigation.

Palacio de Viane: A private residence built in several stages between the 14th and 19th centuries, the palace features 12 patio gardens walled off one from another, each with a distinct style. They range from a quiet, green oasis adjoining the family chapel, to a large, cobbled patio decorated by a Moorish well, to an intimate courtyard with an 18th century sculpture of a lady surrounded by masses of roses, bougainvillea and wisteria.

• Ronda

Palacio de Mondragon: Originally a 14th-century Moorish residence, the palace features several small but intricately decorated courtyard gardens displaying *mudejar*, gothic and Renaissance architectural details. Ronda is an ancient town sitting on a bluff that looks over sweeping views of mountains and chasms; the gardens of this residence, located on the rim of the bluff, use the mountain views as stunning “fourth walls.”

• Malaga

Finca de la Concepcion: Built in the mid-19th century by a family that made a fortune in shipping and used its fleet to import exotic plants, this sprawling garden specializes in over 1000 varieties of tropicals and subtropicals, including 100 varieties of date palms; banana trees, banyans, aquatic plants and cycads are other specialties. Non-plant features include



streams, a waterfall and a small Etruscan-style “museum” that houses Roman statues. ~

JAN WHITNER is the editor of the “Bulletin.” Her books include “Garden Touring in the Pacific Northwest,” Portland: Graphic Images, and “Pacific Northwest Garden Style,” Seattle: Sasquatch Books.

ABOVE: Horseshoe-shaped arches in the Alcazala Palace, Malaga. This type of arch was introduced during the period the Visigoths ruled much of Spain.



THE BEGINNINGS OF THE Elisabeth C. Miller Library

BY LYNN SAUTER

In the Fall 1949 issue of the "Bulletin," Arboretum director Brian Mulligan published an article entitled "Arboreta and their Relation to the Community." In it, he discussed the Arboretum as a source of information for the public and noted, "A good library is an essential part of this service."

From its inception in 1934, the Washington Park Arboretum always had a few reference books. But when Mulligan arrived in 1946, he systematically began to collect a core library. These books were mostly related to woody plants. Many of them were donations from Arboretum members; Unit #41 was especially generous with their contributions. There were old and rare books given by donors who felt it was important to make them part of the growing library. Each year in his annual report, Mulligan listed not only new plant acquisitions but also new additions to the library.

Initially all of the books were stored in the Arboretum office. In early 1968, Mulligan felt that the rare books in the collection needed to be in safekeeping and made an arrangement with the University of Washington Libraries Special Collections to store the most vulnerable of them. They were cataloged and put in a sub-basement of Suzzallo Library on the University campus. The books were safe now—but essentially inaccessible. Over the next few years, several additional volumes were sent to Special Collections.

During 1981 I had several conversations with Arboretum curator Joe Witt about the critical need to inventory both the growing collection of books in the Arboretum office and those stored in Suzzallo Library. As I am a librarian, he asked if I could begin to do

this. I felt that I would have more ability to complete the work if I could become a staff member. Joe couldn't pay me but agreed to have me join the staff as an unpaid member. I worked a couple of days a week on this project for the next three years.

I began working with the books in the Arboretum office. My first task was to inventory the collection, which was housed not only in the office but also in an outbuilding that stored tools and garden equipment. I may be one of the few librarians who, in order to make lists of back issues of very dusty journals, needed to first move a lawn mower and a cement mixer!

At that time there was no definitive list of the rare and valuable books in the sub-basement of Suzzallo Library. My first task in beginning an inventory of these volumes was to find them on the shelves in the dark sub-basement. I then discovered amazing treasures and must confess I spent many hours reading them while sitting on the floor in the Suzzallo basement. I was fortunate to acquire the help of a library student intern who spent even more time listing the volumes. Her name was Erica. She wasn't at all familiar with plants or gardens, but was delighted to discover a large, beautifully illustrated book about plants with her name: "*Ericas* of South Africa." One book that captivated me was the two-volume "A Description of the Genus *Pinus*," by A.B. Lambert, published in London in 1832. Other treasures I found were several copies of the late 18th and early 19th century "*Curtis Botanical Magazine*," with its exquisite, hand-colored drawings.

Within a very few months my initial agreement with Joe Witt changed with the arrival of

Dr. Harold Tukey, the director of the newly established Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH) at the University of Washington. He called to tell me about Elisabeth Miller's funding of a library at the Center and asked me to continue my work at the Arboretum and begin planning for the new library. Dr. Tukey also began to pay me a bit as a contractor—to which I did not object.

A next step was to computerize inventory lists of all Arboretum books in preparation for the move to CUH. In the early 1980s, computers were mainframes that were not really "user friendly." Many hours were spent at the University computer center adding book information to the mainframe. At that time, purchasing a desktop computer within the University system required special permission, not only from the Dean of the College of Forestry but also the University Provost, as the number of individual computers was limited. So we stuck to our mainframe computer listing. Fortunately that process changed reasonably

soon, but not before I had left.

After the groundbreaking in April 1983 for Merrill Hall, which was to house the Elisabeth C. Miller Library, we began working with a University architect to plan for the layout of the library. Having participated in the design of other small libraries, I had definite ideas about certain aspects of the planning. There is always a negotiation between function and aesthetics. Libraries need good study areas, space for a library office, access to a computer system, and attractive display shelving for current journals, new books and other materials. Art, especially botanical art, can be a pleasing addition to the environment.

One part of the library I was insistent upon: a special fireproof, temperature-and humidity-controlled room for the rare books. This took a bit of research about the best approach; the architect also needed to be convinced of its value. Fortunately the decision to build the special room with its necessary features was supported.

Although Mrs. Miller felt strongly that the library should be a resource with materials available to all members of the community, originally its collections were limited to access by CUH staff, students and others in the University.

When Merrill Hall was completed in April 1984, the books needed to be moved from the Arboretum office to their new home. Many fingers were crossed for the library shelving and furniture to arrive before the grand opening of the Hall and the Elisabeth C. Miller Library. The comfortable chairs, the tables and the study carrels were there well in time for the opening. But, of course, the shelving didn't arrive until the very last minute. One bank of shelves was quickly installed, and I spent the late afternoon and early evening of opening day in jeans, hastily shelving a few of the best-looking books. Just as formally attired guests came in the front, I slipped out the back door feeling very happy that this part of the project was complete.

Then came the real work of moving all of the rest of the books to their proper places on the shelves. We were beginning, also, to get donations from individuals and local plant

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groups anxious to make their information available to a larger audience. For instance, the past president of the Rose Society donated many years of past journals. I remember that Clay Antieau, who was a graduate student at that time, helped me bring many boxes from the past president's home in Ballard.

In the Spring 1984 edition of the "Bulletin," I published an article entitled "Book Collections from the Washington Park Arboretum." In it, I discussed the various collections and the exciting new changes that would be coming for these collections. By that time it was obvious that the Library needed a full-time librarian to manage its growth. The Miller Foundation had set up an endowment to support one position. I decided that while having initiated the Library, I was probably not the best person to continue to manage it. A search group was formed. Valerie Easton and Laura Lipton were chosen to share the position. They began in 1985, and the rest is history. Brian Thompson and his staff ably continue to provide service to the whole gardening community, just as Mrs. Miller had wanted from the beginning.

I have many memories of the time when I was shepherding the small collection of books in the Arboretum office and the basement of Suzzallo library into the large collections that now compose the Miller Library. First, I had a lot of fun. Who wouldn't have fun working with gardening books and great people? If I am proud of anything, it would be to have successfully campaigned for a secure space for the library's wonderful collection of rare books. Since the dreadful fire of May 2001 in Merrill Hall, the original rare book room no longer exists. (By good fortune, water and smoke did not penetrate the original room, so no volumes were lost.) And now there is a new safe room in the rebuilt library: The books are still safe, and there for the entire community at last. ~

LYN SAUTER is a retired librarian and has been a member of the Arboretum Foundation for almost 40 years.

Floral Gypsy *continued from page 13*

of our state: "Those of us who love to explore this rough and broken land rejoice in the hope that here is something, this scabland, that man may not despoil." She'd witnessed many changes in the 60 years since she arrived in the region, and she feared the effects of commercial agriculture and the soil erosion and species loss that followed: "So many of our favorite prairies and hillsides elsewhere have had to yield to civilization, for better or worse, for richer or poorer...we blanch at the thought of what irrigation may destroy...for instance the processions of the blood-red sand dock on the sands west of Moses Lake."

Her training as an artist allowed her to appreciate such scenes and to catalog her world in vibrant detail. In addition to her botanical paintings and journals, she was a gifted sculptor and amateur photographer. The sculptures, photographs, writings and paintings alike reveal a delight in the world around her and the deep roots she extended into the landscape of home. The sunny, ebullient and grateful qualities that Burroughs so admired in her spill freely from the preface of "Some Wildflowers of the Inland Empire," the small guidebook that she created for her granddaughter. Her carefully typewritten note might be a motto for life: "You live in a most beautiful world and the wild flowers are one of the loveliest parts of it. Learn to know the flowers and they will become your friends. They are everywhere and they belong to everybody. They have more to teach you than you can ever learn and they give you joy and beauty and a happy heart and a clean mind." This she taught her family, and it is a tenet deeply rooted in those of us who follow her. ~

BETSY HAMBLEN ANDERSON is a Seattle landscape designer and the great-granddaughter of Frances Gilbert Hamblen.



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